

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY: S/S:FVORTIZ

APPROVED BY: S/S:FVORTIZ

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P 271643Z APR 76 ZFF4

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TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 101557 TOSEC 110193

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FOLLOWING IS REPEAT DAMASCUS 2578, SENT SECSTATE APRIL 27:

QUOTE S E C R E T DAMASCUS 2578

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FOR SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE, US, SY

SUBJECT: LEBANON

REF: STATE 100420

1. CONVEYED POINTS REFTEL TO PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR DAOUDI MORNING APRIL 28. HE TOOK CAREFUL NOTES.

2. DAOUDI ASKED WHETHER QUESTION OF SETTING UP LOCAL ADMINISTRATIONS HAD ARISEN DURING BROWN-JUMBLATT TALK, AND FOLLOWING NEGATIVE RESPONSE, LAUNCHED INTO VIGOROUS CRITICISM OF JUMBLATT'S ANNOUNCED DECISION TO ESTABLISH LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES IN SOME AREAS OF LEBANON. SYRIAN POSITION, DAOUDI SAID, WAS CLEAR. IT OPPOSED ANY

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MOVES OF THIS NATURE BECAUSE THEY REPRESENTED TENDENCY

TOWARD PARTITION AND CONTAINED RISK OF BECOMING PERMANENT FACTS. SYRIA, ON THE OTHER HAND, DAOUDI ASSERTED, WISHED TO SEE COUNTRY REUNITED AND NORMAL NATIONWIDE GOVERNMENTAL SERVICES RESTORED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

3. SECOND POINT DAOUDI MADE WAS THAT SYRIA WAS SUPPORTING NO PARTICULAR CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENCY OF LEBANON. PRESIDENT ASAD HAD MADE THIS POINT CLEAR TO VISITING LEBANESE SPEAKER KAMAL ASSAD APRIL 26. LEBANESE THEMSELVES HAD RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHOOSING THEIR NEXT PRESIDENT. DAOUDI EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT SITUATION IN LEBANON WAS IMPROVING AND OPTIMISM THAT POLITICAL PROCESS SEEMED TO BE SLOWLY MOVING FORWARD.

4. DAOUDI ASKED WHETHER WE THOUGHT FRANGIE WAS USING REFUSAL TO RESIGN AS A POLITICAL LEVER TO SECURE ELECTION OF HIS CANDIDATE AS PRESIDENT. REPLIED THAT THIS WAS NOT APPARENT FROM FRANGIE'S CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR BORWN. FRANGIE HAD SPOKEN ONLY OF WITHHOLDING RESIGNATION IF SECURITY CONDITIONS WERE STILL INADEQUATE FOLLOWING ELECTION OF NEW PRESIDENT. OF COURSE AS RECENT DEVELOPMENTS HAVE SHOWN, WE COULD NOT RULE OUT FRANGIE PLAYING ANY CARDS HE HAD IN PRESIDENTIAL SWEEPSTAKES.

5. AT END OF CONVERSATION, DAOUDI VOLUNTEERED THAT PRESIDENT WAS STILL VERY BUSY BUT WOULD CERTAINLY BE AVAILABLE TO DISCUSS OVERALL MIDDLE EAST DEVELOPMENTS WHEN STRESS IN LEBANON HAD DIED DOWN A LITTLE BIT. "WE WISH TO KNOW", DAOUDI SAID, "WHAT HAS BEEN DONE ON THE AMERICAN SIDE EITHER WITH THE ISRAELI LEADERS ON IN VARIOUS OTHER QUARTERS REGARDING ME CRISIS. WHAT HAVE BEEN RESULTS OF U.S. CONTACTS"? REPLIED THAT SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF THIS INFORMATION WAS IN MESSAGE CONCERNING PEACE PROCESS TO BE CONVEYED TO PRESIDENT. HE SUGGESTED WE LOOK TOGETHER AT PRESIDENT'S SCHEDULE TOWARD END OF WEEK TO SEE WHAT TIMING MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE FOR MEETING WITH HIM ON OVERALL ME QUESTIONS. MURPHY UNQUOTE. SISCO

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, CAT-B, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, NEGOTIATIONS, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, PARTITION, PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION, ELECTION CANDIDATES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: vogelfj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE101557
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: S/S:FVORTIZ
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: N760003-0514
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 2
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760417/aaaaaoba.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: 76 STATE 100420
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: vogelfj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 JUN 2004 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <20 OCT 2004 by vogelfj>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LEBANON
TAGS: PFOR, LE, US, SY, (BROWN, L DEAN), (DAOUDI, ADIB), (JUMBLATT, KAMAL), (FRANGIE, SULEIMAN)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006